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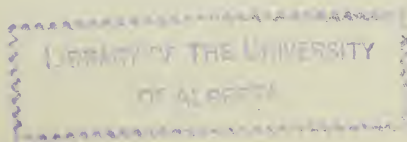


A T H E S I S

ROYCE'S PHILOSOPHY OF THE ABSOLUTE.

by

William Berry.



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ROYCE'S PHILOSOPHY OF THE ABSOLUTE.

Strictly speaking, the problem of the absolute is ultimately one of metaphysics and logic, and it may seem somewhat arbitrary on the part of the writer to regard an investigation into the worth of a contribution to the metaphysical problem as coming under the general caption of "The Philosophy of Religion". It would, however, be a pedantic view of the scope of a philosophy of religion to limit it to the exclusion of what appear to be, primarily, metaphysical problems pure and simple, and which have only secondarily and incidentally, if at all, religious and ethical importance. The sharp distinction between philosophy in the so-called technical sense and religion is not a valid distinction now-a-days, nor, indeed, was, for that matter, at any time. That "a philosophy of religion is a branch of philosophy in general" appears to be a sound and logical principle upon which to work out some such thesis as this. At all events the subject of it had no hesitation in declaring that "If it is worth while even to speak of God before the forum of the philosophical reason, it



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is so because one hopes to be able, in a measure, to translate into articulate terms the central mystery of our existence, and to get some notion about what is at the heart of the world." (1)

Now, the problem of the absolute may possess factors which religion, as popularly understood, is not competent to touch; that is to say that religion does not possess categories under which these factors might be discussed. The absolute has been defined from time to time in such a manner as to entirely fail to satisfy legitimate human demands which are called "religious". On the other hand it must be recognized that religion is somehow or other included within ordinary experience and that if an attempt to define the absolute be defended on the plea that it must be done in order to give validity and unity to human experience, then it is surely possible to formulate a doctrine of the absolute which will do justice to all the demands of experience, religious, in the widest sense of the term, as well as epistemological and ontological. As Dr. Creighton so pertinently puts it: "If this conception of an absolute mind is to be anything more than an abstraction, it

(1) Royce: "Conception of God"--page 6.

must come, not to destroy, but to fulfil the program and promises of the categories of ordinary experience." (1) Whether or not it will be possible to completely identify the religious "God" with the philosophical "Absolute" is not now the question. What is here insisted upon is that there is no a priori reason why the attempt should not be made, and that those qualities which we usually associate with the highest object of religious emotion and experience might possibly be regarded as essential characteristics in an adequate representation of the Supreme Reality.

The author, whose name stands at the head of this essay, has during a long period of intellectual activity endeavoured to give some attention to this problem of the absolute and has formulated a theory of the absolute with this idea constantly before him, namely, to account for the facts of experience. (2) As a great constructive thinker, the quality of his work assures for it the respectful attention of serious students of philosophy. Although an avowed Idealist, he is regarded by all, whether they be Idealists,

(1) "Two Types of Idealism"

Philosophical Review--September, 1917.

(2) cf. Royce: "Studies of Good and Evil"-- p.17, etc.

Pragmatists or Realists, as no mean figure in contemporary philosophical movements.(1) As a colleague of Professor James at Harvard, the edifying spectacle was presented of representatives of antagonistic types of philosophy working together in a personal friendship and official relation which has many times received literary recognition.(2) As has already been indicated, Royce's fundamental philosophical faith was Idealism. He was through and through an Idealist, but he had an amazing grasp upon human affairs and revelled in all the problems of a rich and varied experience. He even includes an account of a squatter disturbance in California in a volume of essays intended to show how an idealistic theory faces and settles many acute problems of life, and does so, for as he says, "I can conceive of no better way to express the intimate relation of every fragment with the whole in the universe as idealism conceives it than in some such way as this." (3)

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- (1) Philosophical Review--May, 1916. Pp. 230, 243, 244, etc.
 (2) cf. "William James and Other Essays"--page 9.
 (3) Studies of Good and Evil--Intro. P.xv.
 cf. also "Philosophy of Loyalty" and
 "The Problem of Christianity," 2 vols.

The method of this thesis will be:

- (1) To state Royce's philosophical basis for his system and the problem of the absolute from the point of view of his Idealism.
- (2) To examine his treatment of the problem under two categories: 1. Metaphysics.

2. Ethics.

- (3) A critical discussion of his concept of the absolute from the point of view of a philosophy of religion.

(1) The precise wording of the task we propose for ourselves will be, it is hoped, significant in view of the distinction which is now frequently made between types of philosophy in general and types of Idealism in particular. It is becoming almost a commonplace to draw fine distinctions between various phases of idealistic philosophical systems. Not all these distinctions are useful or necessary, but within certain limits it is no doubt possible and helpful to classify systems of thought which have otherwise certain fundamental characteristics. As has been already mentioned, Royce was an Idealist, but as some would insist, it is not enough to say so-and-so is an Idealist, some qualifying word or phrase is needed to fill out

the idea. Consequently, Perry refers to Royce's system under the heading of "Absolute Idealism".(1) Miss Calkins places Royce with Descartes, Berkeley, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Lotze and others in a group to be known as the upholders of "Personal Idealism"(2); meaning thereby "that personal or spiritual idealism shares with phenomenalism the doctrine that all reality is of the nature of consciousness.... but consciousness, the personal idealist insists, is a conscious self or person, that is, an unique "real" which is conscious....but which is more permanent than ideas are". But for Miss Calkins this distinction, "Personal Idealism", is not sufficient, for in a later part of her book, she again draws a distinction between "Pluralistic Personal Idealism" and "Monistic Personal Idealism"(3) and Royce is finally classified as a "Monistic Personal Idealist". No doubt it is true that "The present day tendency to identify idealism either with "ideism" or "subjective idealism" is much to be regretted".(4) On the other hand, it is to be feared that the process of refinement among Idealistic

(1) Perry: "Present Philosophical Tendencies". P.175, etc.

(2) Calkins: "Persistent Problem of Philosophy". 4th Ed. P.407.

(3) op. cit. Page 417.

(4) op. cit. Preface XI.

systems will obscure the fundamental characteristics of Idealism as a great historical and valid interpretation of experience in the widest sense of the term.

"I think," says 'Professor Creighton', "it is possible to show historically that the characteristic mark of idealism as it is found in the great systems is its direct acceptance of things as having value or significance.....Its primary insight, which reflection has formulated as its principle, is that the reality known in experience is not something that merely "is" or possesses bare existence, but that as existing concretely, it forms part of a permanent system of relations and values".(1) It is with some such statement as this that Royce would no doubt find himself in hearty agreement, although he would no doubt go on to show that "it is a permanent system of relations and values" for one consciousness, namely "one absolutely final and integrated self, that of the absolute".(2)

We must however examine more in detail the philosophical basis of his system. Neglecting for

(1) Philosophical Review--September, 1917. Pp.515-6.

(2) "World and the Individual" II. P.289.

cf. Vol. I. P.425, etc.

"Religious Aspect of Philosophy". P. 433.

the moment the metaphysical doctrine of "The World and the Individual", his most mature and exhaustive treatment of the problem of the absolute, it may be said that as early as the publication of "The Religious Aspect of Philosophy" in 1885, and again in 1892 when he published "The Spirit of Modern Philosophy", Royce had formulated his fundamental philosophical faith. In the former volume, he shows the "straight and easy path" which "forced him to come to idealism".(1) He indicates the steps, as it were, which he was compelled to take along this "straight and easy path". The first difficulty, then, is to find "a simple adequate hypothesis about external reality".(2) Now a naive view of the world has no difficulty at all about such a proposition. It includes "external reality" as a part of the phenomena of the universe about which we have "ideas"; in short, it is that to which our ideas correspond, so that some such statement as this is possible, namely: "To each necessary relation $a:b$ in human consciousness there corresponds $A:B$ in the external world".(3) But a "view" of the world is not

(1) The Religious Aspect of Philosophy. P.357.
 (2) " " " " " P.338.
 (3) " " " " " P.338.

an "explanation" of it, so that a further question appears necessary. What, precisely, is the hypothetical relation called "correspondence" between facts in the consciousness and so-called facts for consciousness in external reality? At this present stage one hypothesis is as good as another. But on further reflection, an hypothesis which regards the entities "A" and "B" as, in themselves, independent and real--as indeed they are regarded in a naïve realistic view of the world--is seen to present difficulties as soon as questions are asked as to the nature of their reality, and the nature of the relation said to exist between them, viz. "'A': 'B'". On the other hand, we may adopt as a "working hypothesis" a familiar hypothesis of idealism, that the "external" world and its contents are not "isolated somethings floating in a void", waiting to become known by some consciousness, but are rather definite realities present to some consciousness, and that their ultimate characteristic is precisely, that ^{they} are "known". Whatever criticism may be made of the familiar hypothesis of Berkeley, an idealistic theory of reality does hold that "reality is of the nature of consciousness".(1) For the present,

(1) Calkins--op. cit.

therefore, the postulate is put forth that "external reality is, in its totality, an essential factor in an other-than-self consciousness".(1) We shall be compelled to discuss later how, according to Royce, the external world is known; this much is quite clear at this time, that the more one knows the world, the more must one suppose a mind for whom the world is a mental fact and not a bare "x" beyond all ideas. It is at this juncture that Royce's distinctive idealism begins to appear. In answer to the objection that surely there is a "causal relation" between external reality and our "ideas", he points out here, and in the "World and the Individual" develops at length, that the causal category does not of necessity come prior to our knowledge of reality, so that it may be said, here is reality, now we have ideas corresponding to it, and the one is the cause of the other, but rather, "All our thinking is based on the postulate that the external reality is a counterpart and not merely a cause".(2) Whatever "matter" may be, --to refer to the time-honored discussion as to the nature of matter--whether it be Mill's "Permanent

(1) Royce: Ibid. P.349.

(2) The Religious Aspect of Philosophy--P.359.

Possibilities of Sensation" or Kant's "Mögliche Erfahrung"(1) or the "Force" and "Energy" of the Naturalists like Büchner(2), at all events it is clear that in an idealistic theory it is not the "cause" of our ideas. There is a relation between what he calls the "Internal meaning" and "external meaning" of ideas, which is not a causal relation, but precisely a relation of meaning, of significance, i.e. "An idea appears in consciousness as having the significance of an act of will".(3) Now this leads to a very important objection. Perhaps one is altogether wrong in talking at all about external reality; at all events we may be in complete error in supposing that in some way our ideas must or do correspond with it. Here then results a pretty problem; we can be in error about an external world. How is such error possible? And what is meant precisely by "error"? Let this problem stand until later in our discussion, but it must be noted in passing that the objection is by no means as crushing as it seems, for it appears plain that if "external reality" is knowable at all, it exists as

(1) cf. "World and the Individual" Pages 236-238.

(2) cf. Perry: "Present Philosophical Tendencies"- p.69.

(3) "World and the Individual"-Vol.I. P.23.

knowable for a mind, and if, per impossible, it is unknowable, then by hypothesis it is known as such, namely, by its predicate of unknowableness and the contention is thrown out. This does not, of course, commit us to the statement that our ideas and the things for which they stand are of necessity in harmony. The latter part of the objection just stated is indeed a knotty problem in metaphysics and Royce achieved a distinction in the subordination of the problem of 'error' to the greater problem of the absolute. Dr. Hale once said of Royce, who was then just beginning his connection with Harvard as lecturer in Philosophy, "What do you think I heard him doing in a lecture the other afternoon? Why, nothing less than showing that our human ignorance is the positive proof that there is a God--a supreme Omniscient Being!"(1) It is possible then to sum up the philosophical basis of Royce's system in some such manner as this. Only ideas are knowable, the absolutely unknowable cannot exist, "The world is such stuff as ideas are made of. But the world is not unreal, it is the world of an universal mind for it stretches infinitely beyond

(1) Philosophical Review- May, 1916. P. 234.
cf. "Conception of God"-Pp. 18-29.

our private consciousness."(1) "The world as known would be found to be a world that had all the while been ideal and mental, even before it became known to the particular mind that we are to conceive as coming into connection with it."(2) The problem of the absolute then from the point of view of his philosophy is to give a more adequate description of this "universal mind", to show that it does indeed satisfy a rigid logical analysis, in short, "It is to show what we mean by Being in general, and the special sorts of Reality that we attribute to God, to the world, and to the Human Individual."(3)

(2) 1. The most mature and complete discussion of this phase of his system is to be found in his Gifford Lectures for 1899, entitled "The World and the Individual", although it is to be found in all of his works beginning with "The Religious Aspect of Philosophy". I have used the term "metaphysics" to indicate the predominant consideration in the present discussion of the absolute, and the term should signify that type of thinking which is concerned with the meaning of ideas,

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- (1) Royce's "Spirit of Modern Philosophy"-P.380.
 (2) " " " " " " P.368.
 (3) "The World and the Individual"-P.11, Vol. I.

the nature of being and the validity of knowledge. "I am one of those", he says, "who hold that when you ask the question, What is an Idea? and, How can Ideas stand in any true relation to Reality? you attack the world knot in the way that promises most for the untying of its meshes."(1) Let us then be clear as to our terms. What is an Idea? Neglecting for the moment the causes of an Idea, the peculiar specific character of an Idea "is a state of consciousness" which is "there and then viewed as at least the partial expression or embodiment of a single conscious purpose."(2) It must be noted here that it is a most important feature of his system that an Idea have both "Internal" and "External meaning". Now by "Internal meaning", it is suggested that purpose comes prior to idea, so much so that the "idea" is nothing other than "purpose-embodied-in-the-idea". That is to say, that "ideas" in the mass represent "purposes" which are present to what we may here call a finite consciousness. There is, however, another consideration. An idea may and indeed does have reference to that which is beyond the momentary experience of the finite consciousness, that it may not

(1) "The World and the Individual"-Vol. 1. P.16.

(2) Ibid. P.23.

be exhausted by the Internal meaning just now defined. It may indeed refer to something, an object, a thing, considered as external to the finite consciousness. So that when I have an idea of my friend, Frank, I have an idea of which I am able to say, it has an Internal meaning, namely, it expresses my purpose to think of him; it also has an external meaning, namely, it refers to an object of my knowledge, an empirically known mass of warm animated matter--and something else--which has received that particular name or sign. We have then apparently a complete antithesis between what is, quite obviously, an affair of what common sense calls Will, and what common sense, equally persistently, calls "an independently real world", i.e. External Reality. By what means is it possible for us to overcome the antithesis, or by what authority do we speak of an External Reality which, by hypothesis, is meant specifically and precisely, by our ideas?(1) In other words, how do we know that our "ideas" represent or correspond with "reality", granted that there is "reality" to which they might correspond? This, it may be observed, is that "persistent problem of philosophy", the problem of knowledge. Well, one method of attack on

(1) cf. "The World and the Individual"-Vol.1-P.31.

the problem will be to find the validity of Reality as external and "independently real". If it appear that this validity may indeed be successfully challenged, then it will follow that "the external meaning is genuinely continuous with the internal meaning, and is inwardly involved in the latter, or else the idea has no external meaning at all." (1) Reality, then, or what it is "to be" will be explained in terms of purpose and will, "To be means simply to express, to embody the complete internal meaning of a certain absolute system of ideas." This is by no means a final statement and the question, What is Reality? or What is Being? must be discussed, since the terms must be regarded as interchangeable. (2)

Royce reviews three great conceptions of Being, and develops a fourth as his own peculiar contribution to the discussion. These are respectively, Realism, Mysticism, Critical Rationalism and the fourth, which is Royce's own conception, "which I shall call the Synthetic, or the constructively Idealistic conception of what it is to be". (3) Space does not permit of

(1) Ibid. P.33.

(2) cf. Ibid. P.52, note.

(3) Ibid. P.61

extended quotation and treatment of the first three and I shall confine myself to a brief reference to the first and a comparison between it and the fourth conception.

The first is the Realist Conception of Being and although it has had a very long and attractive history it has never been so persuasively and brilliantly stated as by the present day Realists. As Royce defines it: "to be real, therefore, according to this conception, means to be independent of an idea or experience through which the real being is, from without, felt, or thought, or known." (1) This position may be supported by statements of the New Realists. Pitkin in "New Realism" says, "The Realist holds that things known are not products of the knowing relation, nor essentially dependent for their existence or behavior upon that relation." (2) Again, Montagne in the same volume says, "Realism holds that things known may continue to exist unaltered when they are not known, or that things may pass in and out of the cognitive rela-

(1) Ibid. P.62.

(2) "New Realism"-P. 477.

cf. B. Russell: "Scientific Method in Philosophy"-chapter on "Our Knowledge of the External World".

tion without prejudice to their reality."(1) (Italics are mine). It is quite clear that what is intended is that there are many "real" things existing as "hard" facts extra-ment~~um~~. So "hard" are these facts that consciousness must take cognizance of them, by hypothesis, for longer or shorter periods of time, but that the relation existing between them and consciousness when they are so present to it is, precisely, one that shall make "no difference" to them, whatever happens to consciousness. It would be very interesting (at least for the writer) to follow up this Neo-Realistic argument at length, but this is not the place to do it. Suffice it to say that the Idealist asserts that he does not know what is meant by such terms as "extra-ment~~um~~" and "things are real independent of knowledge of them"; for realities devoid of such qualities as 'knowledge' gives to them are "empty nothings", and utterly negligible.(2) Further, whether the "real" are many or one in that abyss where

(1) Ibid. Pp. 474-5.

cf. B. Russell: "Problems of Philosophy", chapter on "Our Knowledge of Universals".

(2) An interesting critique of "The New Realism" and Russell's "Lowell Lectures" is given by Miss Sinclair in her recent book, "A Defence of Idealism".

London, 1917.

knowledge doth not corrupt nor consciousness break through nor steal, is not of course "known", but if they are "many" it seems trivial to ask: Are they in a world of Independent Beings? since a fundamental feature of a Realism is a postulate of complete independence. But what does independence mean? Is it not a cognitive term, and are we not engaged in that delightful task of trying to transcend our consciousness much as a cat would try to jump out of his skin? An "idea" may by good fortune enter into some sort of relation with the thing it is supposed to represent, but only by good fortune, since it is never clear whether the idea meant just that particular thing and may indeed not mean anything at all. Thus a "thing" may have no "idea" corresponding to it at all, and forever remain "unknown" but not on that account non-existent, since by hypothesis the knowledge relation does not give existence. The real problem for the Realist is to account for any unity whatsoever in the hypothesis of "beings" or "reals" mutually and completely independent. If "a" is to be defined in some such way as to make it completely independent of "b", so that the presence, absence, or alteration of "b" does not in the slightest degree affect "a", or vice

versa, and if "a" be supposed to represent a "real" and "b" a knowing process resulting in an idea of "a", then we have two "reals", "a" and "b", a "real" and an idea of it, for surely idea "b" is a "real" and must be included in a realistic world.(1) But how, if they are mutually independent? since to be "included" constitutes a relation which "does make a difference". "The consequence is, then, that both the realistic definition and the totally independent beings prove to be contradictory and vanish together, leaving us...the thesis that if the other, which our finite thinking...seeks to attain, is to be defined, it cannot be totally independent of the thought which defines it."(2)

We are now ready to pass on to a consideration of "the fourth conception" or Royce's theory of the Absolute. Quite evidently a realistic theory of Being is inadequate, for "Being" or "Reality" is regarded as independent of consciousness, as unchanged by the cognitive relation. It will be incumbent upon this alternative theory, therefore, to show that "Being"

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- (1) cf. Royce: "The World and the Individual" Vol.I-Char.III.
 (2) "The World and the Individual"--Vol.I-P.143.
 cf. "Conception of God"-Supp. Essay-Pp.153-181.

gains its validity from consciousness. Let us then take up the question of the Internal and External meanings of Ideas. It will be remembered that by "Internal meaning" was meant, purpose-being-expressed-in-Idea, and "External meaning" referred to "that other sort of meaning, that reference beyond themselves to objects, that cognitive relation to outer facts", (1), which we have mentioned from time to time as indicative of External Reality. Now, when we speak of "Truth", it is possible to mean one of two things, namely, either "that about which we judge", or "a correspondence between any idea and its object". The first would be the way of logic and is precisely the method adopted by Russell (2) and others. The other brings us to the question of what is meant by "correspondence" or the relation of "idea" to "object". This is precisely the problem, par excellence, for Royce (3), and the discussion leads quite naturally to a full statement of his own position

(1) "The World and the Individual"-Vol.I-P.26.

(2) "Scientific Method in Philosophy"-
Lect.II-P.33-"Logic as the Essence of Philosophy".

(3) Although Royce does pay some attention to the "logical" side of the question. cf. Ibid-Pp.270-299. cf. McTaggart: "Mind"-1900-Pp.261-2.

in the "synthetic idealistic conception". Let the question be stated in some such words as these: "What is it that is called an "object" of my "idea", and when does this relation exist between them, namely, that "object corresponds with idea"? It is clear that this "correspondence" does not necessarily exist in a "point to point" likeness or resemblance, for "A photograph looks like a man, a map may look, in outline, like the land mapped. But numbers and the symbols of an algebra no longer seem to our senses at all like the objects defined by these symbolic devices for establishing correspondence; and the accounts in the ledger, while very systematically corresponding, item for item, to the commercial transactions, are very unlike them in immediate interest and sensible appearance".(1) The relation of "correspondence" therefore must be involved in a "purpose", that is, in the will-to-see that there are present "ideal characteristics" in both object and idea, and further, that an idea is said to be true when it has "the sort of correspondence to its object that the idea itself wants to possess".(2) So far this is excellent, but

(1) Ibid. Vol. I- P.304.

(2) " " " P.306.



what about the so-called "object"? For it is an apparently well-founded opinion that in order to be object of a given idea, the object must be cause of the idea.(1) The validity of such ~~is~~ a statement is however dubious, for I have an idea of the end of the war and certainly there is nothing in so-called external reality, an object, per se, to cause such an idea. That is to say, it is an event in future time, about which I can make valid judgments, although it is not given in this momentary experience as these words are written. "But, I have a pen in my hand, a watch in my pocket, I am writing on a table", says one, "and are not these objects, concrete objects which correspond with, even if they do not give rise to, my ideas, and how can it be said that my idea, say of my watch, possesses the sort of correspondence it wants to possess? Must it not have that correspondence willy-nilly, precisely because it is there, a watch made up of various metals and having certain specific characteristics such as weight, size, color, hardness, etc.?" This resolves itself, then, into an admission that there is

(1) Would an observer who stood, as it were, outside both "idea" and "object" be able to judge whether or not there was a correspondence between them? I confess the query is to say the least interesting.

a difference between what are called "objects of sense" and more subtle or intangible objects^{and events}, such as the end of the war, the value of π , etc. Now, it is, of course, well-known that the so-called permanent "object of sense" suffers grievously at the hands of psychological science, and that color, hardness, weight, etc. do not survive a psychological inquisition as independent entities. Again when I have an idea of my watch, I do not mean my pen or my neck-tie, so that "watch" does get some degree of definition by my purpose to mean it and nothing else. This, however, does not remove that "stubborn fact" of experience that there is somehow, in a thing, an object of an idea, something over and above mere correspondence, that somehow eludes definition but yet is "there" as a sort of immediate certainty. We have then an antinomy of the kind that Kant delighted in. Royce (1) then proceeds to state the antinomy in the familiar style of "The Critique of Pure Reason", the result in each case being equally satisfactory or unsatisfactory, according to point of view. The outcome, interesting to us in this connection, is that error is certainly possible in finite

(1) Ibid. Thesis - Pp.320-323.
Antithesis - Pp.323-324.

ideas, that error is a fact of experience, and therefore real. But we were after a definition of truth, and, behold, we arrive at a conclusion that error is possible!, for "the very possibility of error, the absolutely certain truth that some ideas give false accounts of their own objects shows that some objects contain what is opposed to the intent of the very ideas that refer to these objects."(1)

Now this problem of error would in itself be an adequate theme for a complete thesis, and I can only barely indicate Royce's method of treating it. He was immensely fascinated by it; as is proved by the fact that it appears in all his books; in the "Religious Aspect", as the expanded presentation of a "thesis prepared for the Doctor's degree of the John Hopkins University in 1878"(2), and in the "Spirit of Modern Philosophy" under the caption of "The World of Description and World of Appreciation"(3), as well as in the "Conception of God"(4) and "The World and the Individual"(5) as an integral factor in the general argument.

(1) Ibid. Page 324.

(2) "Religious Aspect"- Preface- P. 13.

(3) "Spirit of Modern Philosophy" - Pages 381-434.

(4) "Conception of God" - Pages 18-29.

(5) "The World and the Individual"-Vol.I-Pages 325,etc.

What is, precisely, an error? What do we mean by error, and to what is error relevant? Dr. Sheldon in an article, "Error and Unreality" in the *Philosophical Review*, states: "The problem of error comprises two distinct questions, viz: what is the nature of the mental process when we err and what causes lead to it? and again, what reality, what status in metaphysics has the object of error, the illusory thing?"(1) I have quoted this to show how the problem of error is attacked along psychological lines, and, in the case cited above, involves a discussion of the "reality" of the "illusory thing" or "object of error". Royce's problem was not of this kind. For him "error" was a complement of "truth" and "reality", and indeed could not be discovered or constituted apart from some absolute truth or reality, for, by hypothesis, "the idea seeks its own. It can be judged by nothing but what it intends".(2) Now, it follows, does it not, that wherever there is an "error", there is involved as a condition of that "error" an implicit or explicit reference to something beyond its limits, a standard or norm known to this extent, that a given case does not "harmonize" or cohere with it fully(3). This

(1) *Philosophical Review* - May, 1916 - Page 335.

(2) "World and the Individual", Vol. I - Page 325.

(3) On this, cf. *Ibid.* Page 335.

might be put in some such way as this: "what the idea always aims to find in its object is nothing whatever but the idea's own conscious purpose or will embodied in some more determinate form than the idea by itself alone at this instant consciously possesses. When I have an idea of the world, my idea is a will, and the world of my idea is simply my own will itself determinately embodied"(1). We shall have opportunity to speak again on the question of this fundamental Voluntarism in his philosophy. It will be noted that when I adequately "will" for a certain end, when I adequately know a certain object, no other "end" or "object" will satisfy the requirements, that is, no other object could take its place as object of that idea. Let me quote again. "In seeking its object, any idea whatever seeks absolutely nothing but its own explicit and in the end complete determination as this conscious purpose, embodied in this one way. The complete content of the idea's own purpose is the only object of which the idea can ever take note."(2) The words in italics are of first rate importance in this connection. Although at any finite moment, I

(1) Ibid. Page 327.

cf. "Spirit of Modern Philosophy" - Page 431.

(2) Ibid. Page 329.

have an idea, notably imperfect and incomplete, and by hypothesis, by no means exhausting in the given moment all the purpose and significance of reality, yet it does indicate unmistakably that reality which is the full and complete embodiment of my "purpose" and "will", which can only be realised by an "other" beyond this moment's consciousness. The antinomy then is solved, "for the object is a true "other", and yet it is object only as the meaning of this idea".(1)

We are now ready to go on to a definition of the absolute. It finds expression over and over again throughout his works. Let us take one given in his Gifford Lectures and there set forth as the Fourth Conception of Being, "What is, or what is real is as such the complete embodiment, in individual form and in final fulfilment, of the internal meaning of finite ideas."(2) Amplified, this definition may be made to read as follows: "In the world as we define it, there can exist no fact except as a known fact, as a fact present in some consciousness..... to the consciousness that fulfils the whole meaning of whoever asserts that this fact is real....it follows

(1) Ibid. Page 331.

(2) " " 339.

then, that the whole world of truth and being must exist only as present...to the unity of a single consciousness which includes both our own and all finite conscious meanings in one final eternally present insight."(1) Now for a final statement.

"There is an absolute experience, for which the conception of an absolute reality, i.e. the conception of a system of ideal truth, is fulfilled by the very contents that get presented to this experience. This absolute experience is related to our experience as an organic whole to its own fragments. It is an experience which finds fulfilled all that the completest thought can rationally conceive as genuinely possible."(2)

Thus it may be said that all Reality is for the Absolute the sum total of his experience, and that both "idea" and "object", "internal meaning" and "external meaning" of my finite experience find a place along with many other finite facts in an absolute experience regarded as the activity of an Absolute Consciousness. The Great Reality then turns out to be a Great ^{Self} ~~Person~~, a greater self of which each finite self is an identical part yet by which it is infinitely transcended.

(1) Ibid. Page 397.

(2) "Conception of God" - Pages 43-44.

(2) 2. There yet remains the discussion of the absolute from the point of view of ethics, before we can pass on to a formal discussion of the whole system in accord with the terms of our program.

In the preface to his work, "The Philosophy of Loyalty", Royce declares, "My own general philosophical opinions have been set forth...most elaborately in the volumes entitled "The World and the Individual", ...but I have not published any formulation of my ethical opinions since the brief review of ethical problems in the first part of my "Religious Aspect of Philosophy".(1) But it is none the less true that he touched the ethical problems many times, notably in "Studies of Good and Evil", and in Vol. II of the "World and the Individual". This being the case, it will be necessary to pick out his more important statements upon ethical questions and to connect them in some sort of progressive unity. It is in this connection that Royce has something to say upon a philosophy of religion. He finds that religion differs from philosophy, pure and simple, in that it has to do with feeling, while philosophy tries to find out what it can about a real world. Religious philosophy,

(1) "The Philosophy of Loyalty" - Page IX.

therefore, seeks to find values in a real world, and wants to know "what in the world is worthy of worship as good". In other words, the aim of a philosophy of religion is to find a genuine moral ideal. In the first place, therefore, it must be asserted that an idealistic system of philosophy cannot, in the nature of the case, find a valid moral ideal in any external sanctions, whether they be derived from popular and current opinions or from a more or less hoary tradition, springing out of the past history of the race.(1) Nor can the ultimate moral sanction be subjective in character, for it must have validity and authority for other selves, and the idealist is quite as well aware of the fickle character of the "subjective" as are his opponents, the Realists and the Pragmatists. "Why an individual should obey his conscience unless he wishes to do so, cannot be made clear by conscience alone."(2) Throughout his discussions, Royce insists on the validity of "intent" in actions. To quote from his treatment of the question, "Altruism and Egoism". "The altruism of consequences as such is morally insignificant, and

(1) cf. Royce: "Religious Aspect of Philosophy"- P.55.

(2) "Religious Aspect of Philosophy" - P. 56.

"World and the Individual"-Vol.II. Pp.347,etc.

the altruism of intent is alone morally significant". But the question of "intent" cannot be so summarily dismissed. In all recent ethical discussions the question, what constitutes a "moral" act and vice versa, an "immoral" act, has been, in the opinion of the writer, unnecessarily clouded or obscured by this reference to society, viz: that ultimately the goodness or badness of an action is determined as it sub-serves or impairs the grand end of self and race preservation. For, in the last analysis, this is an appeal for validity to the end of an action and not to the "intent" or springs of action.(1) Whether the end be defined as the happiness of the individual, or "the greatest good for the greatest number of people", or even that remote and somewhat uninspiring end, the preservation of the human race through nobody knows how many ages yet to come, the result is the same. It is always possible for some one to rebelliously assert: "What I want to know is what constitutes the ethical validity of an action here and now. I cannot wait until results have determined which category - good

(1) cf. Spencer: "Data of Ethics".
 Also Mill: "Utilitarianism".
 Paulsen's "teleological energism" is not far removed from this position. Paulsen: P.233.

or bad - should include the act in question." Royce treats this whole problem most admirably, asserting that, "Surely in fundamental ethics we are discussing what we ought to aim at, not how we can get our aims, so long, at least, as we confine ourselves to the general principles." (1) The thesis which he sets forth and defends at length may be expressed in some such way as this. Ethical theories are hampered in their usefulness by the fact that an exactly opposing one may be found in each case. Now it will not do to hurl anathemas at the opposing theories, for this, quite obviously, is an endless and fruitless process. It is consciousness that realises the opposition, i.e. the conflict is in us, and when we present to ourselves rival theories which do conflict, it follows that we have to that extent realized equally the warring aims. "Moral skepticism is itself the result of an act, namely, that act by which we seek to realise in ourselves opposing aims at the same time." (2) Ethical aims expressed in ethical theories are, then, the expression of somebody's will. But "what represents a will but

(1) Royce: "Religious Aspect" - P. 73.

(2) " " " " P. 134

a will. Who would know what it is to have an end unless he actually had ends himself?"(1) Therefore to do justice to any moral system, one simply must realise it by reproducing in oneself the will that accepts that particular end set forth. But to realise the conflicting aims is to make oneself a battle ground; for "whoso realises the various conflicting aims in the world, his are all these aims at the moment of insight, when, so far as in him lies, he realises them and mentally desires their success."(2) Must this battle go on forever with no hope of ultimate ethical success? No, for in the very act of protesting against the conflict one virtually says: "I, too, have an end,...and so my will is not aimless. I desire to realise these aims all at once. Therefore, I desire their harmony. This Higher Good would be attained in a world where the conflict ceased."(3) The ideal then amounts to this, the will to direct my acts towards the attainment of Universal Harmony. Expressed as a maxim or principle after the Kantian manner, it would be, "So act as thou wouldst will to

(1) "Religious Aspect" - P. 137.

(2) Ibid. P. 139.

(3) " P. 140.

act if all the consequences of thy act for all the aims that are anywhere to be affected by this act could be realised by thee now and in this one indivisible moment."⁽¹⁾ Turning then to actual experience, what do we find? Simply this, that, unless some great effort is made, we regard our fellows as so many active agencies which may or may not affect our fortunes, and not as so many inner experiences, i.e. so many wills. What Royce means by "insight"⁽²⁾ is that rare moment when we recognise that the reality of our neighbors is precisely as is our reality. "Selfishness says: I shall exist; unselfishness says: The other life is as my life."⁽³⁾ But why should the other life be regarded as of the same order and reality as my own? Because the realisation of my own real will as that which unites conflicting aims - and therefore wills - in one, means that, "an absolute moral insight, which we can conceive, but which we never fully attain ourselves, would realise the true inner nature of all the conflicting wills in the world."⁽⁴⁾ Stated in a

(1) Ibid. P. 141. ~~cf.~~⁽²⁾ Pp. 168-169.

(3) Ibid. P. 161.

(4) Ibid. P. 168.

Royce's later books, "The Philosophy of Loyalty" and the "Problem of Christianity" develop the idea of the community as another type or level of Being. See "Problem of Christianity" Vol. I, Lect. IV.

different from the Universal Will says: "Let each will be acted out as if by one Being who combined in himself all the other wills." In finding myself, by means of the "moral insight", I find my neighbor, and I cannot stop there. I reach instead the Universal, the Absolute, as the logical end of the process. The Universal Will, so reached, must be a higher positive unity. As mere groups of individuals with conflicting wills, we cannot hope to attain finality or freedom from conflict, for it has been made clear that finitude means limitation and therefore conflict. But we may transcend these limitations by "the moral insight", and live together united - yet possessing our individuality - in order to develop every form of life which brings men into harmony. "And when we judge of a good action we must say, not that this was good because it made someone happy, but that it was good because it tended directly or remotely to realise the Universal Will."(1)

Up to the present in this essay, no characterisation of the content of the Absolute has been given, nor has anything been brought forward which will do more than give support for a belief in the existence of

(1) Ibid. P. 217.

cf. "Philosophy of Loyalty", Lecture VIII. Pp.351 to 397.

the Absolute. From the point of view of metaphysics, it was found that the hypothesis of an Absolute Unitary Being was valid and indeed quite necessary, in order to account for a world in which were found such things as ideas and objects of ideas, selves, and not-selves, and so on. It is true that a hypothesis of a plurality of consciousness might have been put forth, for whom reality was object and to some extent also as that of which they themselves partook.(1) Such an hypothesis was put forward by the Oxford School of Personal Idealists, notably by Hastings Rashdall.(2) But for Royce, such a hypothesis would have been misleading and incomplete. It is the very essence of his system that Reality should be one. The outcome is the conception of the Universe as Absolute.Self, as the organic unity of all the myriads of existent partial selves. From the point of view of ethics, the concept of the "Infinite Will" gained a certain definition as that which gave final and ultimate unity to a myriad of conflicting, although partially unified, wills. Strictly speaking, we have merely justified the ontological predicate, The Absolute exists, as the ground for existence of

(1) cf. Miss Calkins' "Persistent Problems"- P. 418.

(2) "Personal Idealism", Ed. by Henry Sturt, Oxford.
 Paper on "Personality, Human and Divine".
 Hastings Rashdall.

certain other more or less interrelated existences. The term, Self, which has been used again and again, has no significance beyond existence and consciousness of existence. Now it is surely possible, nay imperative, that further predicates of the nature and character of the Absolute should be given and substantiated. It is also imperative that these predicates should be of "worth" and "value". It has been pointed out again and again, not only by opponents of an "Absolutism", but also by upholders of such a theory, that the term, Self, when it is given to the "Absolute" must derive its significance from its human content. That is to say, it must mean, fundamentally, when it is applied to the Absolute Reality, what it means when it is applied to finite consciousness. Royce in his famous criticism of Bradley's theory of the Absolute, asserts that "the Absolute, despite all Mr. Bradley's objections to the Self, escapes from selfhood and from all that selfhood implies or even transcends selfhood, only by remaining to the end a Self." (1) Is it a safe criterion to attribute to the Absolute Self all experiences and characters of the finite self, having in mind all the

(1) "World and the Individual" - Supp. Essay- P. 552.

time those qualities inconsistent with absoluteness? I am well aware that a Realist like Perry would say, "It is by no means a safe criterion! In fact he does not hesitate to use the term "equivocation" to the practices of the absolute Idealist. "The fundamental equivocation in idealism" says Perry, is its use of terms that ordinarily refer to characteristic forms of human consciousness -- such as 'thought', 'will', 'personality', 'spirit'. Whatever may be true of consciousness in general, the moral and religious significance of consciousness is bound up with those very elements which must be eliminated if the conception is to be employed as an unlimited generalisation".(1) But why eliminated, if the conception is to be valid beyond particular consciousness? All that the Realist asks of the Idealist is that he should give us those distinctive terms which have most value and worth, even from a pragmatic and realistic point of view, and then orders him to go on to a definition of reality without his most important apparatus of definition. All of which reminds one of the fable of the dog and the manger. We do not want your terms, says the Realist, but we will not let you

(1) Perry. "Present Philosophical Tendencies". -P.180

use them. Even Bradley views with suspicion the terms indicative of what we would call a full-blooded experience of a self, when those terms are applied to the ultimate Reality. (1) He says quite distinctly, "In order to reach the idea of the absolute, our finite selves must suffer so much addition and subtraction that it becomes a grave question whether the result can be covered by the name of 'Self'." May I be allowed to quote from a discussion of this question which the writer prepared three years ago? Up to the present I have not materially altered my opinion as expressed at that time. "We are therefore prohibited from using even as analogy, what we find in ourselves as 'selves' in our explanation of the absolute. Yet we must insist that Reality, if the term mean anything at all, must include us, even though we be "appearances". Appearances exist, that is certain, to deny it is nonsense, and whatever exists must belong to reality. What we do not know, on Bradley's account, is "the way in which appearances can belong to Reality". Strictly speaking, he is correct in affirming that 'all our ways of thinking reality as an unit are, at best, approximations'. But if his criticism of 'knowledge' is valid in respect to

'appearance', the conclusion is forced on one's mind that it ought to be valid in relation to Reality, for throughout all his discussion of Reality he is forced to use the term of relation and analogy, and he does not hesitate to use the term of negation, in the definition of his absolute. It is "impersonal", and 'unmoral' and 'non-cognitive' in our sense of the term. I venture the suggestion that these predicates gain meaning and significance only by analogy and reference to our selves. Yet even Bradley could use a term 'sentient experience' when he is compelled to speak positively concerning his 'absolute'. That phrase is, to the writer, meaningless, if it must be held in thought along with such an entity as the absolute conceived by Bradley". (1)

This, however, is a digression. It will indicate though, that the writer is quite in sympathy with Royce when he ventures to apply the term "self" to the ultimate Reality. A distinguished pupil of Prof. Royce, one whom I have frequently quoted in these pages. -- Miss Calkins, -- asserts, that "it is the belief of the monistic personal idealist, that the two

(1) Essay. "The English Absolutism" (Green and Bradley)

characters, 'selfhood', and 'absoluteness' are compatible" (1) On the other hand a capable metaphysician like Prof. Taylor, who acknowledges his debt to Royce, goes so far as to say, "The absolute, being free from all internal discord, can not have a not-self, and therefore cannot be called a self."

While recognizing the profound problem involved in this discussion Royce is quite clear that the absolute is a "self". What are the characteristics of a self? Among others surely these may be said to be essential characteristics of a self, namely, "self-consciousness" and related or implied processes, such as perception, knowing, feeling, willing, striving, and in addition, qualities called 'moral', i.e. goodness, or badness. Now Royce distinctly affirms that these are predicates of the absolute. For example, he says "Unless the absolute knows what we know when we endure and wait, when we love and struggle, when we long and suffer, the absolute in so far is less and not more than we are". Again he teaches that it is "a self-conscious person". (2) By a "person" he means one who "is and knows us" (3), for whom my deeds and life are necessary. In a fine passage, he says "In this sense, one can then say, the absolute unity of

(1) "World and the Individual." Vol II. Page 364.

(2) "Conception of God" p. 302.

3 "Religious Aspect of Philosophy --p 471.

consciousness, contains, involves, includes, not merely finite types of self consciousness, not merely finite contrasts of 'self' and 'other', but the contrasts and the consciousness of its own being as, thinker, exper-
ience, seer, and as Love or Will, and all of these as essentially interrelated aspects of itself as unity."(1)
 It would be possible to go on adding quotation to quotation to show how Royce defines his absolute. Whatever criticism may ultimately be directed against his conclusions and the worth and validity of them, it is not possible, I think, to criticise his "absolute" for being "A thin-blooded attenuated thing." It is a stock criticism of an absolute Idealism, that in every case the result is something far removed from experience; something to be spelled in capital letters and regarded as "too utterly utter to utter"! (2) Royce defends himself at length against such a common objection, and lays it down as an essential factor of his entire system that it is only by experience that the absolute is reached at all. It is that precisely which makes our experience real and worth while. (3) I shall reserve for the present the discussion of one or two questions which

(1) "Conception of God". Page 301.

(2) cf. Schiller. "Studies in Humanism"
 cf. "World and the Individual" Vol. I pages 55-60.

(3) See also "Philosophy of Loyalty" "Conception of God" Page 44.

naturally arises in such a discussion of the absolute. In drawing this portion of the thesis to a close, let it be said that Royce has given a clear-cut, definite interpretation of the problem of reality. What has been established in this thesis, I trust, is

(1) That all Reality is in the last analysis of the nature, a single individual or person, which differentiates itself into the manifold personalities and objects of the world as they are empirically perceived.

(2) In the second place, the absolute 'though absolutely organized experience', is a person in the full and exact sense of the term; that he has an experience transcending, though not external to that of human selves; that he is not a society of selves, nor an unknown Reality, but rather he who endows our finite bits of selfhood with their significance and worth. In the strict sense of the phrase, "In Him, we live and move and have our Being."

(3) "By philosophy of religion, says Höffding, "we may understand either a mode of thinking which is prompted by religionor a mode of thinking which makes religion its object."(1) The distinction is valid enough as long as it is remembered that a philosophy

(1) Höffding. "Philosophy of Religion. Page 1.

of religion will be a dull and arid affair if it be too completely separated from a religious impulse. A perennial question in connection with all metaphysical systems of Reality is "Can we regard the 'Unity of Reality', the Supreme Being, the 'Absolutely organized Experience' as the object of the highest religious emotion and devotion? Such a question involves many considerations, chief among them being the relation between the individual and the 'Absolutely organized Experience' (to use Royce's phrase). If the main characteristic of religious devotion be 'reverence' then religious experience involves implicitly or explicitly the personality of the devotee as well as of the object of devotion or reverence. "Reverence is possible between persons, but not between persons and things." (1) As has already been pointed out, it is a specific and fundamental feature of Royce's system of philosophy that the absolute be regarded as possessing to the full the qualities and characteristics of personality. Every attempt to set forth an 'absolutism' encounters the Scylla on the one hand of negating the worth and validity of human freedom and individuality and on the other hand, the Charybdis of

(1) Geo. Galloway. "Philosophy of Religion" Page 491.

neglecting the transcendent character and greatness of the Ultimate Reality. Again, it has been asserted that the absolute includes and explains all finite experience; it must therefore follow that such a notable and always-present-to-finite-beings experience as the existence of evil must in some way or other find an explanation in a final analysis of the nature of the absolute.

The discussion which follows will, then, take the form of an examination of (1) the meaning of individuality (2) the question of evil and its solution, and (3) the possible identification of the metaphysical 'Unity of Reality' and the religious 'God'.

(1) There is a peculiarly strong and apparently deep-seated belief that all moral value is inseparably connected with the persistence of the individual through the changes incidental to existence, and, -- what is more important, -- depends upon, (for lack of a better term) the 'ethical freedom' of the individual. It was a fundamental defect of the philosophy of Spinoza, for example, that it destroyed human freedom, in so far as the acts of the human being follow of necessity from the nature of God or substance,

of which he is simply a modification or expression.(1)
 It is much easier however to say that such an such a system does justice to, or violates the principle of individuality, than to state precisely what this principle of individuality really is. The task is not made any easier by the variety of the methods of estimating individuality. The difficulty is to select from a mass of presented evidence that which will reveal the essential principle which we seek.

Psychologists like Galton and Thorndike talk of individuality in the terms of differences exhibited by particular examples of human beings.(2) "For Biology, the Self is the Individual and the Individual is the living organism" (3) That is to say that each speck of protoplasm which ultimately becomes a distinct "thing" be it man, or plant, or animal, contains that which gives it its individuality. Miss Sinclair in her essay on 'Samuel Butler' asserts that he (Samuel Butler, a Biologist), held that what made individuality was acquired after birth, and was very insignificant compared with the inherited "capital" carried

(1) cf. Spinoza. "Ethics" Part V. Bruce "Apologetics."

(2) Galton "Inquiries into Human Faculty"

(3) Thorndike. "Individuality" Page 2.

over from the experience of the race(1). From the point of view of a philosophy of religion, the term "individual" must mean not bodily or psychological differences, nor the existence of biological characteristics but essentially, ethical worth and reality. It has been well expressed by Prof. Howison. "By spontaneous moral sense we doubtless believe, indeed, that we are each entirely real and a seat of inalienable rights"(2) In another place Howison says "the dignity of the ethical individual demands the real variety and separate existence of the citizens of the 'City of God' ". "A person", says Hastings Rashdall in an essay already quoted, "is a conscious, permanent, self-distinguishing individual active being"

The crux of the whole problem appears to lie in the reconciliation of the self-distinguishing character of the individual and the all-embracing, all-inclusive character of the absolute. The problem may be stated thus. The conception of a self (even though the adjective 'absolute' be attached) which in some way or other includes other selves is plainly an absurdity, for how can we argue that a self has the power to include other 'selves' in itself?, since no amount of psychological or metaphysical investigation ever

(1) Sinclair. Ibid. Page 3 of Pages 17-19 etc.

(2) Howison. "The City of God and the true God as its Head" page 106. Essay in "Conception of God"

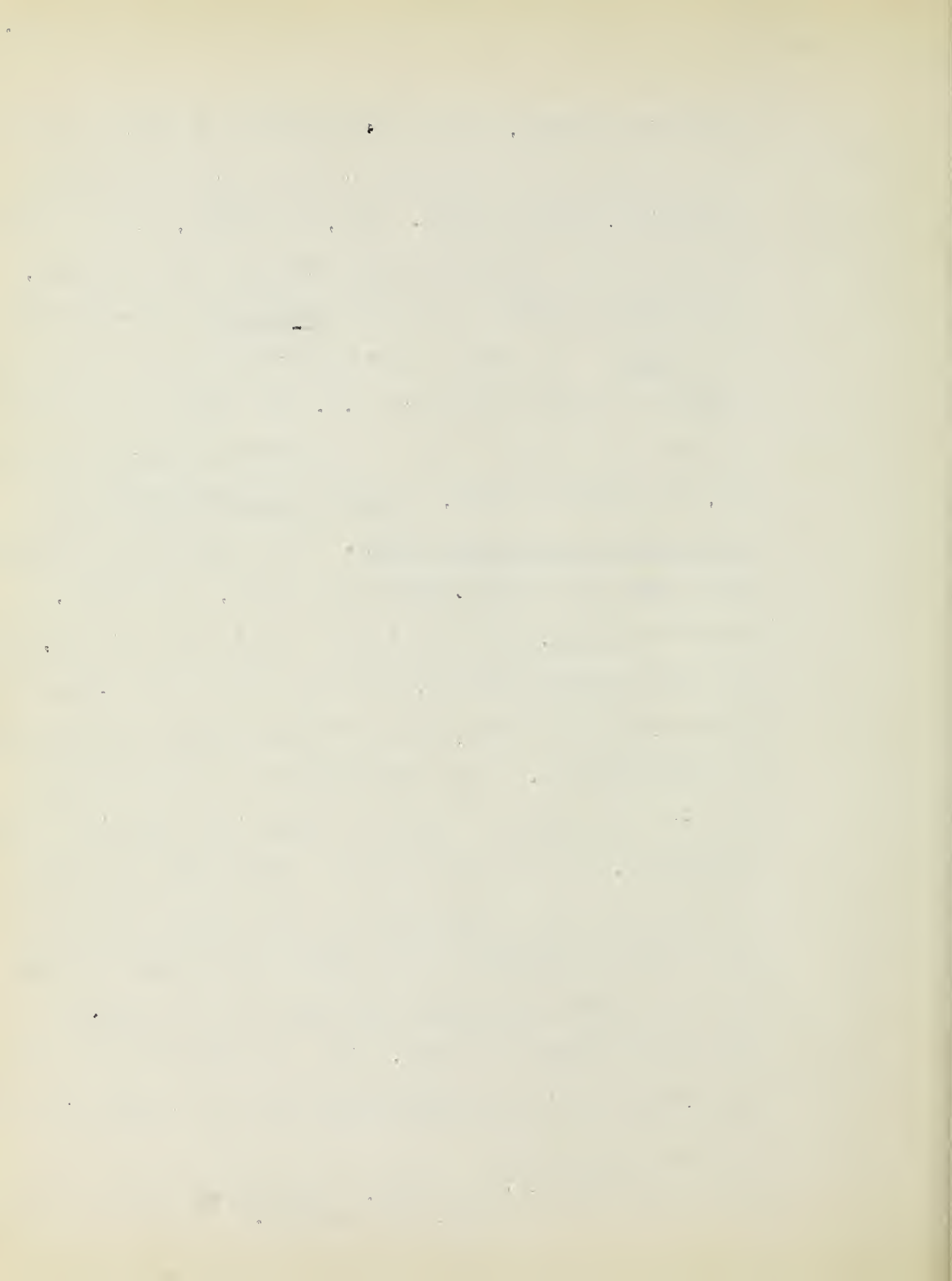
shows us the only self we know of, namely, our own, doing it. Again, to make human selves manifestations of an 'including self' is to make human individuality impossible. Let me indicate how Royce meets this very acute problem. At the outset Royce insists that an 'ethical real individual' is also a logical individual, that is, if the independent reality of the individual in question be asserted, then it must conform to the principles of logic prior to a consideration of the ethical character it is reputed to possess. In other words an ontological predicate precedes a value predicate. Now what is meant by the assertion of the reality of the existence of an individual? Neglecting for the moment all consideration of any peculiar characteristics of an individual and regarding it merely as a "this" or in the Aristotelian language, as a 'that' $\tau\acute{o}\delta\epsilon$ and not a 'what' $\tau\omicron\iota\acute{o}\nu\delta\epsilon$ we ask, how do we arrive at a determination of the that? One answer may be, Experience presents us with "a segmented whole", i.e. the universe is cut up into segments, and that these are the "immediate" data of experience. The empirical world contains all sorts of

cf. Conception of God. Supplementary Essay by

Prof. Royce. Pages 220-221.

segmented masses, but it is only when we give a content and meaning to the segments that we have attributed 'individuality' to them. Now, of course, this at once abandons the distinction made between the existence, the (that) ($\tau\acute{o}\delta\epsilon$), and the 'content' ($\tau\omicron\iota\acute{o}\rho\delta\epsilon$) the (what). In other words Individuality is in the last analysis due to "content", i.e. the "what" of anything. On the other hand it may be denied that experience gives us, as immediate data, a series of segments to say nothing of a segmented whole. What experience actually does give is at any particular moment, a discrete, separate phase, and that if the result be a series, or an unity having meaning, it is not due to the empirical presentation of sense but to the synthetic activity of a consciousness. Thus our problem of individuality in any case seems to resolve itself into "meaning" and "content". It is clear that we cannot hope to settle the question by a discussion of the spatial character of a thing expressed in the phrase 'the impossibility of two objects occupying the same point of space at the same instant of time'. (1) We have seen in the preceding section of this essay that for Royce "meaning"

(1) cf. Conception of God. Page 253. Compare Taylor op.cit. Page 58.



and "content" are precisely the results of an activity called "will" and that a "that" becomes also a 'what' when it partially or completely expresses my purpose-embodied-in-an-idea. That is to say, "that one individualizes when one feels or wills. There is nothing individualizing in the merely perceiving or thinking consciousness." (1) This means that when I discriminate between the particulars of sense experience, I have involved very complex mental processes known to psychology as 'ideational' and 'conceptual' processes; further, I have done this because I, am somehow an "individual" different from the things given in sense-data. But how do I become an individual? It is clear that I have not always been conscious of the fact, for the distinction involved between an "individual" and the "things individualized" is the result of a very subtle and complex analysis of experience, and comes only with a certain degree of maturity. The problem has therefore changed from one of 'knowledge' (that is, the ultimate explanation of relation between 'ideas' and objects which the ideas in some way or other represent, and the final order or types of order in

(1) Calkins. op. cit. Page 438.

reality) to the problem of Being, or the question of what constitutes An Individual who can individualize. It would take me too far afield to follow an analysis of the way in which an individual comes to self-consciousness or better still to a consciousness of his individuality. (1) Our immediate question is, what constitutes an Individual? Royce's position is that both 'thought' and, in a wider sense, 'experience' do not provide categories to define the individual. (2) He knows a distinction between what he calls a 'World of Appreciation' and a World of Description. (3) Thus there is an empirical friend whom I have named Frank. I can describe him in all the categories of the understanding I like to use; like a piece of rock, or a lump of clay, he weighs so much, is made up of such and such a combination of elements etc. But there is a "real" Frank not so describable, in fact, I cannot describe him at all in empirical terms, in other words, he (the "real" Frank) is appreciated and not describable. (4) His thesis is "Man individuates the objects

(1) On this cf. Royce "The World & The Individual" Vol. II. Chaps. IV. V. and VI. also Studies of "Good and Evil" Chaps. VI and VIII.

(2) cf. "Conception of God". Page 269.

(3) cf. "Spirit of Modern Philosophy". Chap. XII. "World and The Individual" Vol. II. Lecture II.

(4) cf. "Religious Aspect of Philosophy. Page 409-412.

of his knowledge because he is an ethical being. God individuates the objects of his own world and 'knows them as individuals, for no other reason'. (1) In other words, the principle of Individuation is Will.

I have already mentioned in this essay that there is an essential voluntarism involved in the philosophy of Royce. (2) Nowhere is it so emphatically stated as in connection with the principle of individuation. We saw that so far as relation between 'object' and 'idea' was concerned it resolved itself in a matter of will-or-purpose-fulfilled in the object of knowledge. It seems perfectly fair to draw the conclusion that the 'will' or 'purpose' existed before it became "fulfilled" in an empirical object of sense. It follows then that "knowing" is an assertion or an acknowledgment of ultimate reality in so far as it is given in the particulars of sense. We do not form or create sense-data as such. We accept empirical sense-data as somehow independent of the activity of our consciousness, although, not, of course, of consciousness. Things are simply to be accepted as intrinsically momentary,

(1) Conception of God. Page 259.

(2) Royce later modified the voluntarism in his philosophy, although it is quite clearly expressed in his treatment of the individual and also of the cognitive processes.



yet as involving in themselves a reference to something beyond themselves; in the last analysis to an order of experience which transcends our own, i.e. the "Absolutely organized Experience". But an acknowledgment is a passive affair; what is active in the process is the will-to-acknowledge certain empirical sense-data as embodying my meaning expressed in my ideas. If, now, we ask for a justification of this activity of volition we are told that it is ethical and ultimate and no "theoretical justification" for it can be given. It is as compelling, as underived, as is Schopenhauer's "Will-to-live". (1) Royce uses the word 'Love' as well as 'Will', and states as his conclusion of the principle of individuation to things known, "This practical, this passionate, this lovingdogma of love, "There shall be no other", is, I insist, the basis of what later becomes the individuating principle for knowledge".

We are still left with our problem on our hands, namely, How am I an individual? To say that the "Will-to-acknowledge" (3) to find my meaning in sense data is

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- (1) "Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung" (The World as Will and Idea) cf. 'World and the Individual' Vol. I. page 434-455.
 - (2) "Conception of God". Page 262.
 - (3) This is not Royce's term. I have ventured to use it on the analogy of Schopenhauer's term.

ethical does not help me very much, for I must assert that this 'Will' does not only reside in me, or, better still, is the essential character of myself as 'individual', but is also to be attributed to other individuals; my friend Frank hypothetically can "acknowledge" reality and find his meanings fulfilled in empirical sense-data, even as I can do so.(1) What distinguishes me from him? Here we touch the real ethical problem. I must be real, so must he be real. How is that reality constituted? Even though the 'real' Frank be not subject to the categories used in 'description' he must be sufficiently distinguished (which is a category after all, but I can not help it) from me to be ethically free. The solution to the problem lies in a reference to an absolute self who individualizes. "The only possible moral world is a world where various individuals are so free from one another, so relatively separate from mutual predetermination, that each has his own share of the Divine Will, his own unique fashion of determining his attitude towards the whole, while all are so related to one another and to the absolute that they do realise, when viewed altogether the unity of

(1) cf. Conception of God. Page 274-5.

the Absolute Ideal. (1) The crux of the matter lies in the fact that to be an individual being means that "the absolute finds in him the fulfilment of an exclusive interest, such as, in this individual world, nobody else can, or from God's point of view, nobody else shall fulfil". (2) In conclusion of this part of the discussion, let me summarise the argument. Since the absolute is a self, he must possess the ability to individualize, i.e. he is able to distinguish through "will" and "meaning" the parts of his experience. Each individual represents therefore an unique part of the absolute. Socrates was an individual in the sense that only that ideal being called the 'real' Socrates expressed in the meaning of his life in its fulness an unique purpose of the absolute and furthermore, could so express it. Instead, therefore, of being swallowed up in a "night where all cows are gray" or being "lost in a lion's den to which all tracks lead and from which none return" my friend Frank and I and all other ethical individuals find the guarantee of our individual reality precisely herein that we are

(1) "Conception of God". Page 275. cf. The World and the Individual" Vol. II. Page 339.

(2) Ibid. Page 268.

(Italics mine)

essential and unique expressions of this absolute self. "You are at once an expression of the divine will, and by virtue of that very fact the expression here and now in your own life, of your own will Nowhere else in the universe is there what here expresses itself in your conscious being nothing is vainly repeated, you too as individuals are unique. Therefore are you in action free and individual because the unity of the divine life implies in every finite being just such essential originality of meaning as that of which you are conscious." (1)

I must now briefly touch on the second of the considerations indicated in this discussion, that of the problem of evil, and then pass on to the third and more important, namely, that of the identification of God and the absolute.

Touching the problem of evil Royce's solution differs very little from a great many which have been offered from time to time. Evil is not an "absolute" and 'permanent' reality. The absolute, of course, cannot be regarded as in any way evil, and the problem is to reconcile the postulated goodness of an absolute

(1) "The World and the Individual". Pages 469-470.

with the actually-experienced evils of finite experience. Let us be clear as to our terms. Goodness and Badness are antithetical terms and as the absolute is complete and therefore consistent, both these terms cannot be applied to it. That is to say, an absolute cannot be both 'good' and 'bad'. Now it is possible to reject both terms and make the absolute beyond 'good' and 'evil', i.e. make it transcend morality all together. Such, we have seen, is the method adopted by Bradley. But this ties us up, as it were, to the prospect of a totality of reality which does not exhibit that most valuable of personal characteristics namely, goodness, (1) i.e. essential and permanent value of the highest order. Without following up that line of criticism, it might be dogmatically stated that unless the all of Reality be totally and absolutely "good" it is not worth bothering about. It is, of course, possible to set forth cumulative arguments showing why it must be an ethical hypothesis and therefore a philosophical hypothesis. In the last analysis, however, it is 'felt' rather than 'known'. True the problem has been brought before us, by the Pragmatists and the Realists,

(1) Nietzsche and the Super-men to the contrary notwithstanding!

to say nothing of Nietzsche and last and perhaps least of all, H. G. Wells, that we have no right to postulate an ultimate goodness which is also now a fact. For example, a realist like Perry can write "It is the practical function of intelligence not to read goodness into the facts, but to lay bare the facts in all their indifference and brutality, so that action may be contrived to fit them to the end that goodness may prevail".(1) (It is very curious that "facts" should be "brutal" when one is desirous of establishing their indifference and independence, but we will let that pass.) Again, what is called the "hazard of faith" is invoked to somehow warrant us in continuing to live in the off chance that this will not come to pass, namely, "that all the labours of the age, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of an universe of ruins".(2) The "bracing" character of the hazard is, of course, granted by the Idealist as well as by the

(1) Perry "Present Philosophical Tendencies". Page 329.

(2) Russell quoted by Perry *ibid.* Page 346.
cf. James "Pragmatism" Pages 96-123.

Pragmatist and Realist; and he, as well as they, profoundly hopes that "religious faith has to do not only with the truth that there are values, but that they may prevail". (1) Unlike them however, he finds the warrant for the hazard of faith in the actual constitution of things, especially of himself as a part of the universe. The new Idealist recognises that the old charge against an absolute Idealism, viz. that it provided for an absolute, completely perfect and static, in whom there was no progress at all, to say nothing of a legitimate progress and that the problem of 'evil' in finite experience was 'solved' by the simple method of calling it an "illusion" and "unreal" and so forth, or at the very worst, of simply ignoring the problem altogether, had a degree of force and was in some way an objection to a theory of the absolute. I hope to touch upon this question subsequently in this essay. For the present let it be dogmatically asserted that 'goodness' is an ultimate determination and that the universe, that is, the 'absolutely organized experience' is fundamentally good.

(1) Ibid. Page 340.

There was apparently no need to discuss the question, for Royce nowhere doubted that in the last analysis 'goodness' was an essential characteristic of the absolute, that it formed an essential factor of the "what" of Reality. That being the case the term 'evil' must disappear as a term of ultimate significance. What then is evil? The conventional distinction between "physical" evil and 'moral' evil is maintained by Royce. In harmony with his idealistic theory of Being, the "evil" character of events find an explanation in their fragmentary nature. "A finite ill is a fact of experience whose fragmentariness makes our universal search for the Other, for what lies beyond, for the context, explanation, and supplement of this fact, peculiarly pathetic and eager. In the most general sense of the word evil, all finite facts are indeed evil, precisely in so far as, when taken in themselves, they have no complete meaning and leave us searching still for the other". (1) From our point of view, however, the question of "moral" evil is of most importance. Here the source is one of "Will" and is strictly speaking, a matter of

(1) "The World and the Individual". Vol II. Page 362.

'selfishness' "For when we call the 'evil' the work of any agent, we mean that it expresses that agent's will, as he embodied his will at some temporal moment of his life." (1) This is very familiar; what is not so familiar is the explanation of nature of the absolute as good while yet maintaining the actuality of "evil" i.e. "moral evil". Evil is a subordinate factor or element of good, which is evil in a state of isolation. Now "perfection" is only possible through conflict and suffering. The finite being approximates to perfection only in so far as in a moment of temptation "he realizes evil, he fights it, and at the same time realizes his fragment of the perfect divine life in the moment itself of struggling with it." (2) "Thus in the moment of "insight" one condemns the evil that one experiences, and in condemning and conquering the evil it, i.e., the moral insight, forms and is, together with the evil, the organic total that constitutes the good will!" Now the absolute must recognize "evils" as such and recognise them as bad. But the absolute is conscious of the bad only to hate it; he recognises evil only to

(1) Ibid. Page 365.

(2) "Religious Aspect". Page 452.
cf. Spirit of Modern Philosophy. Page 459.

vanquish it. The 'evil' lies in the fact that it is included and accepted by a will; as opposed to an absolute Will. "The absolute will as such, was just what in the evil deed, in so far as it was your free deed, you denied at the moment of your act." (1) Now, just as an individual 'adds to his larger goodness' by overcoming, by hating, and condemning completely the evil impulse; just as the good world is not innocent and does not ignore evil, but possesses it and still conquers it, so the absolute finds his holiness in that hatred and condemnation of all finite rebellious wills, by thwarting them. "What the evil will is to the good man, whose goodness depends upon its existence, but also upon the thwarting and condemnation of its aim, just such is the evil will to the divine will. (2) The moral evil then is not final, "for every evil deed must somewhere and at some time be atoned for, by some other than the agent, if not by the agent himself, and this atonement, this overcoming of the evil deed, will in the end make possible that which in the eternal order is directly manifest, namely, the perfection of the whole." (3) In conclusion therefore, goodness is

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- (1) "The World and the Individual". Vol. II. Page 372.
 - (2) Studies of good and evil. Page 28.
 - (3) "The World and the Individual". Vol. II. Page 362. cf. "Religious Aspect". Page 456. and especially Problem of Christianity. Vol. I. Lecture V.

an ultimate determination of the absolute; and "moral evil" is but a factor in experience to produce a larger and worthier holiness.

(3) The task which yet remains is to indicate an answer to the question of the identification of the metaphysical "Absolute" with the religious "God" or the "God" of religion. Each is reached along different avenues of approach. The metaphysical "Absolute" appears as the crown and fulfilment of the implications of knowledge considered as a phase of the total life of consciousness, while the "God" of religion appears as the answer to the demands of 'Emotive processes' in that psychic totality. Is it possible to bridge the gap and in a synthetic act unite the two? An illustration will serve to explain my meaning. In a recent book by G. H. Wells entitled "God, the Invisible King", there is given a popular statement of a problem of deep philosophical and religious significance. The fact that it is rather badly done and is full of contradictions will not affect the usefulness of its presentation of the problem for my purpose. For Wells there is a God who is limited, circumscribed, at times rather impotent in the face of great stress and opposition, a God who is a glorified human being, plus something, -- which after all is not very

much. Again there is an Invisible King. "A Veiled Being" (spelled in capitals and meaning something beyond utterance) who does not reveal himself in or to poor finite dust, but who is in some way or other to be regarded as a necessary but inscrutable and unknown Reality. Now the one is the God of Religion, and the other may well be "the absolute" the final "Unity" etc. I am not now concerned with Wells's theory of religion, nor with his application of certain well known and much talked of philosophical maxims. As I said before, Wells did his work very badly and the book will have at best an ephemeral existence and significance. The problem existed before and still exists. (It is possible to regard the religious Ideal as identical with the metaphysical Ideal?

It is, of course, a truism that there is no doubt, there is no problem of the existence of the absolute on the basis of an idealistic philosophy. If it (the idealistic philosophy) does not logically establish the existence of an "absolute", or a "plurality of selves" then it has miserably failed to do the one thing which justifies its existence as a philosophy. The 'content' of the 'Absolute' or the "plurality of selves", will be another question upon which it might have some-

thing to say, but the minimum it must do, is to show that an ontological predicate is rational and necessary. Now Royce's 'Philosophy of the Absolute' does far more than this; it does in point of fact give "content" and a rich and full and significant content to the concept of the Absolute. It will have been noticed that he does not hesitate to use the term "God" over and over again, especially in his address before the Philosophical Union of the University of California. (1) In that book he distinctly characterizes his view as "theistic" and not "pantheistic".(2) Theism is a philosophy, a specific system of thought about the ultimate nature of reality. Religion, to quote Royce, is a relation "a form of communion with the Master of Life." Now this is the question. Is the object of Religion most firmly established upon a Theism, which is a philosophy, or upon the "emotive processes" which is our best term for a very definite element in consciousness? For the present it may be said that those who profess to know most about the object of Religious Experience (which I shall hereafter call 'God') do most emphatically

(1) The Conception of God.
 (2) Ibid. Page 49.

declare that their relation to God does not possess as its chief characteristic an intellectual or purely cognitive process. (1) In other words 'God is not so much "known" as "felt!" The consideration of this and similar facts leads a psychologist like Leuba to question the objective existence and validity of the God of Religion. "I cannot persuade myself that divine personal beings, be they Christian God, or primitive Gods have more than subjective existence." (2) "Desire creates the Gods, but there is nothing to correspond to the desire." Again, in the same book, Leuba states, "The objective existence of personal divinities or equivalent psychic powers is an assumption necessary to religion; but the mere belief in their existence is quite sufficient to account for the important place it has occupied and still occupies among the factors of human development." (3) Now, if this extraordinary statement means anything at all it means surely that although it cannot be demonstrated that there is an object of religious experience, yet a belief in the

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- (1) Compare Leuba. "A Psychological Study of Religion" Pages 212-229. James "Varieties of Religious Experience". (2) Leuba. Page 10.
 () Pratt "Psychology of Religions Experience".
 (3) Ibid. Page 18.

existence of one is wholly good; and I suppose must further mean that if it were forever and finally demonstrated that the hypothesis, namely, God does not exist as ultimately Real" was a true statement and not to be rejected it would nevertheless be "good" to go on believing it to be not true. This is, of course, a big question, and to dogmatise on the one ~~side~~ side is just as easy and tempting, as it was easy and tempting for Leuba to dogmatise on the other side. Nevertheless I cannot believe that he has established his point. It is an utterly mistaken view that "God is not known, nor understood. He is used, -- a good deal; sometimes as a meat purveyor, sometimes as a moral support, sometimes as friend, as an object of love". I cannot indicate just now what are the grounds of my rejection of this position stated by Leuba; one thing does merit expression however, and that is this, a sounder psychology than Leuba's supports rather than destroys a valid belief in the existence of a Being worthy of the devotion and relationship involved in the hypothesis of 'God'. A fundamental defect in his psychology is the implicit exaltation of the cognitive and intellectual processes of man at the expense of the 'emotive processes'. He concludes that 'belief in the Gods of

religion rests as a matter of fact upon induction drawn from the inner life", (1) the inner life being defined variously as "being the material for what is called an induction of the existence of a divine power" (2) and again "inner experience" which it is claimed, leads directly or through faith to a knowledge of God, without the mediation of science and of metaphysics".(3) As a result, theology which deals with "God" is a branch of psychology, and because psychology is a science, an empirical science, "Then Gods of the religions have the value of empirical deductions and are therefore objects of scientific research as much as, and (4) for the same reason as, any other scientific hypothesis. So far, so good, but the Gods are 'subjective' in character, their existence is not real or objective, they are creations of the subject to meet various needs, chiefly emotional, of the subject. "The reason for the existence of religion is not the objective truth of its conceptions but its biological value". (5) Is it too great a strain upon strict impartiality of judgment

(1) Leuba. Ibid. Page 212.

(2) Ibid. Page 233.

(3) Ibid. Page 275.

(4) Harvard Theological Review.

(5) Leuba. Psychological Study of Religion. Page 53.

to assert that precisely because the objects of religious faith and devotion do meet the emotional needs of man more than the intellectual, Leuba chooses to deny the ultimate existence of the Gods or God? It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Leuba errs in assuming (as he seems to assume) that were God 'established clearly upon a philosophy, or a theism which involve^s predominantly cognitive and intellectual considerations there would be no problem of his ultimate objective existence. Failing this, there is a problem, a problem which has already been stated in that extraordinary quotation given above. Does it however follow that the intellectual processes report Reality as it is, and the "emotive processes" do not concern themselves with it all, and need not, for that matter? It is, in the writer's opinion, a much sounder psychology which finds the religious experience arising out of the valid and legitimate element in the total psychic life which has received various names, i.e. the "fringe of consciousness", "feeling processes", etc. (1) Such a position enables one to note the

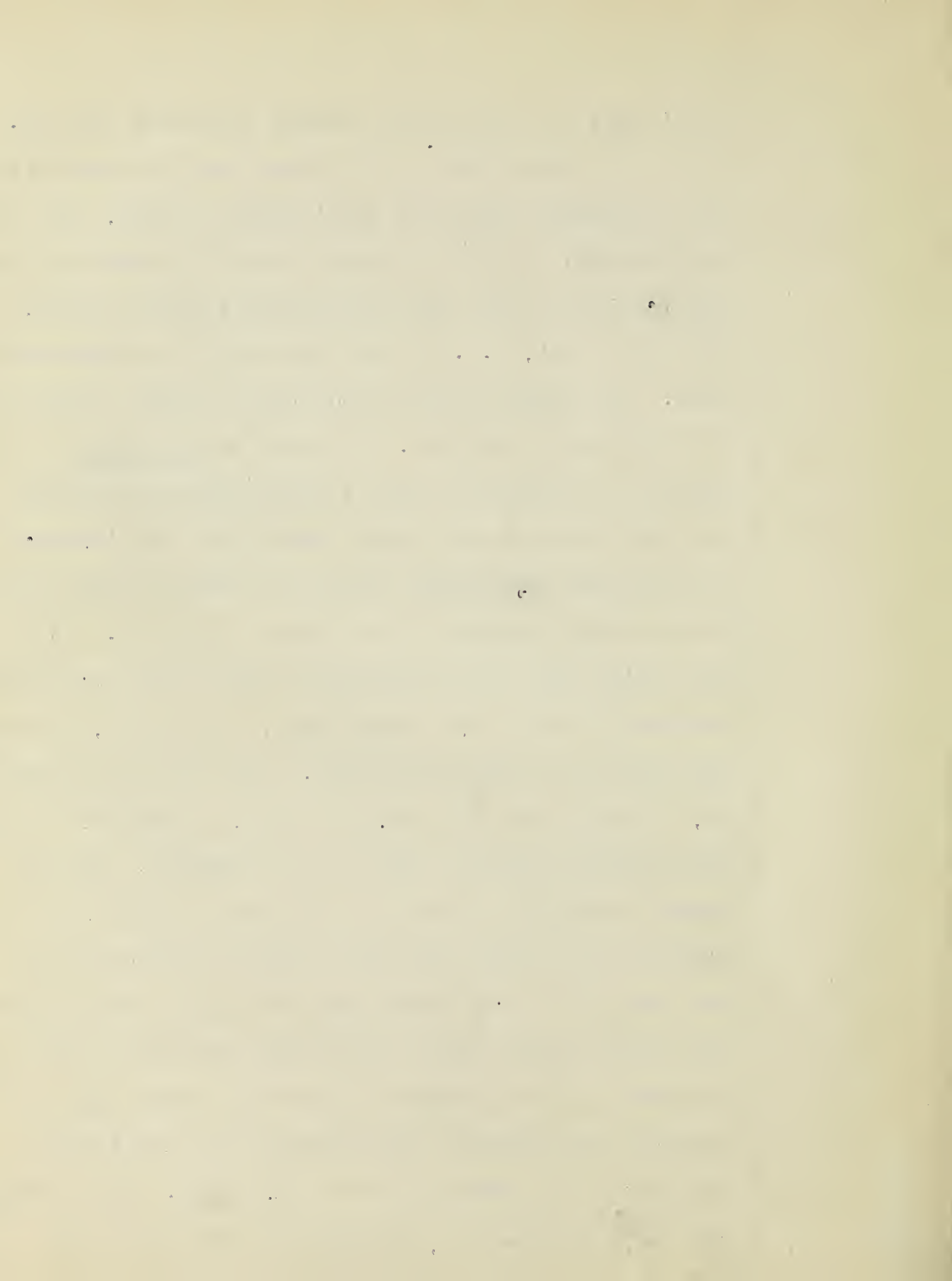
(1) cf. King. "Differentiation of Religious Consciousness."
Pratt. Psychology of Religious Belief especially the chapter, The elements of Psychic Life.
 Baldwin. "Feeling and Will".

significance of the following statement. "God is valued, not as an explanation of things and an assistance to the understanding, but rather as an immediate help in the practical and emotional life;..... it is not so much his gifts as Himself that is longed for and desired by the deeply religious soul." (1)

Assuming therefore the results of a long and intricate discussion of the elements of the psychic life it seems to be well established that the persistent belief in the 'real existence' of God which has marked the history of religion is not founded on a fundamental illusion, but is, through various forms and in many ways, a genuine and valid apprehension of the heart of reality. If the religious environment is bound up with the history of man in such a way that he must act as if his ideals were valid and had a real reference to something greater than man himself; if, the religious adjustments which have been made have proved necessary and have been co-terminious with progressive stages in the advance from lower to higher types of effective life then, surely, even on pragmatic grounds, it is permitted one to say that the religious

(1) Pratt. "Psychology of Religious Belief".Page 278.

ideal must in some degree possess objective reality. If it is a fact that the religious ideal is essential to the highest unity and development of life, then the religious ideal can be no mere shadow projected by the imagination or any other subjective process of man, but it is real, i.e. it is a necessary and fundamental fact. This much surely is necessary before a philosophy of religion is possible. It would be grotesque in the extreme to attempt to have a philosophy of religion were that which alone gives meaning and significance to religious experience by some alchemy of speculation proved to be a pompous and gorgeous illusion. It is not denied that many representations of that ultimate spiritual reality have been vague, incomplete, unworthy and sometimes completely false. The history of religion is, reviewed from one point of view, a pathetic story, from another point of view it is a tragedy. But we cannot change the course of development which has already taken place and which has been achieved at the cost of so much suffering both mental and physical. The highest spiritual or religious experience ever attained is very different from those vague and inchoate strivings to give expression to what was stirring in the deep places of the being. But it may well be, and indeed is, regarded as a fact that the



difference is not one of kind but of degree, and that a bond unites the far removed extremes; a bond forged in the fires of human experience.

I am, of course, well aware of the fact that many current religious conceptions simply cannot be reconciled with a metaphysical doctrine of the absolute, nor can the 'God' of many religions be identified with that Unity of Being to which our thinking has led us. If reason has led us to interpret the primal self-activity, which has been called the absolute, in terms of Personal Being with the living unity which that Being implies it would be treason to our reason to identify that grotesque Being who passes for God in many minds with that final and complete self we found in our search for ultimate Reality. But the "God" of the highest religious experience is nothing short of that ultimate Reality; for, as we have already seen, the absolute was described in the terms of Personality, of Self-Consciousness, and further, it was held to be a final and complete determination of Reality that it was good. Even Leuba makes his definition of religion wide enough to "find room even for the experiences of those who feel themselves in relation

with an Impersonal Absolute, a mere Principle of unity in a world of which we are not only spectators but parts." But he goes on to distinguish these experiences from others ... which have given rise to the historical religions by classifying them under passive religiosity.⁽¹⁾ The "Impersonal" Absolute would not be admitted as a statement of the position here adopted, but with this exception Leuba's statement finds a ready response in the mind of the writer. If my metaphysics make it impossible for me to see in the God of my religion the ultimate Reality, He who is the condition of my existence and who gives validity and meaning to it, together with the whole of other existences, then so much the worse for my religion. For religion must be in the last analysis a rational Weltanschauung, and this can only be achieved by the whole integral life of man and not by any one phase or element. On the other hand my metaphysics must recognise the value wrought in human experience and held dear in consequence. Among those values are those of goodness, justice and truth and when these are attributed to the heart of Reality, whatever the name we care to give to it, it must be

(1) Leuba. Page 54.

considered that man is not merely whimsical and capricious in so doing, but is, on the contrary, obeying the fundamental constitutive impulse of his being.

This essay must now be brought to a close. May I be permitted to say in conclusion that it is, in the writer's opinion, a signal mark of the value of Royce's philosophy, -- which has been examined in some of its phases, -- that it does make a sincere and worthy attempt to give a well-balanced and mature answer to some of the problems of our existence. That there are many difficulties still outstanding Royce himself would be the first to admit. It is always good, however, to give credit where credit is due, and full credit is due to Prof. Royce for his frank acceptance of the problems. His theory of the absolute is not that of a static, passionless abstract Being, cold and austere and impersonal in an universe where values are at stake. Rather must it be said of his absolute, as he said it of Hegel's, -- but with far more justification in the first case than in the latter, -- "The dust and blood of ages of humanity's spiritual life are upon him; he comes before us pierced and wounded but triumphant, -- the God who has conquered contradictions and who is simply the total spiritual consciousness that

expresses, embraces, unifies and enjoys the whole wealth of our human loyalty, endurance and passion."

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